



GOOD PRACTICE INVENTORY

Exploiting Potentials of

Social Enterprises through Standardized

European Evaluation

and Development System

SOCIAL SEEDS

Interreg Europe



SME competitiveness



European Union
European Regional
Development Fund

I. GOOD PRACTICE COLLECTION

1. Name of the good practice (100 characters)

Local Network of Nearby Services of the Municipality of L'Aquila (*Rete Locale dei Servizi di Prossimità del Comune dell'Aquila*)

2. Overview (2000 characters)

In these recent years, the Municipality of L'AQUILA has been engaged in a complex and long reconstruction process, after the devastating earthquake of 2009 which caused more than 300 victims and the destruction of a great part of the town. The crisis following this catastrophic event heavily impacted on the social and economic tissue, causing a progressive impoverishment of the population and even weakening the situation of the most vulnerable groups. In this context, volunteer associations and no-profit organisations have acquired an increasing key role, and for this reason, the Municipality of L'Aquila decided to invest in activating a social public-private partnership composed by public bodies and associations, able to support the local welfare system: to this network was assigned the important task of co-designing and co-coordinating services and additional interventions to the already existing range of social assistance's essential levels, managed by the city. The aim of this effort was to implement a decentralisation of social services' access points within the territory, bringing the services as closest as possible to citizens (especially near new settlements after the earthquake) and matching their needs.

This initiative envisaged two levels of experimentation: 1) to test a model of integration and interaction between the activities of the municipality and the different associations operating in the area, with the objective of enhancing and optimizing a mutual enrichment of knowledge. 2) To create and enable new and shared paths, able to provide clear and flexible answers, especially to fragile groups with specific needs (in particular, elderly and people with disabilities).

The initial foreseen interventions have been focused on three main areas: a) social mobility, b) centers for families, c) further homecare assistance.

3. Abstract (500 characters)

The Local Network of Nearby Services of the Municipality of L'Aquila was promoted by the municipal department for social policies and is part of the "co-working laboratory for social innovation" of the Abruzzo Region. The initiative involved 18 different associations and NGO's and financed several interventions in order to respond to social needs of most problematic groups. The different projects were gathered in 3 macro-areas: social mobility, family assistance, and integrated housing services.

4. Coherence with the Dimension of the Social Enterprise Inventory

- Social innovation (including services)*
- Social impact and measurement opportunities*
- Cooperation atmosphere (PPPs)*
- Regulatory frameworks and bottom-up grassroots*

- Social entrepreneurship skills and competencies*
- Access to finance (including external funding)*
- Access to market (including the internationalization approach)*
- New(ly) established social enterprise model*
- Other (specify): _____*

5. Policy Instrument connected with the good practice

Even if this initiative have been entirely planned and funded by the Municipality of L'Aquila, which approved an Action Plan for Social Services for the period 2011-2013 and identified in the section "Special Interventions" the Action "Network of Nearby Services".

However, there are three different measures of ESF Operational Programme 2014-2020, that could be connected to this initiative: within the Specific Objective 9.1 "Reduction of poverty, social exclusion and promotion of social innovation", the action 9.1.2 is dedicated to the creation of innovative social services to sustain families with multiple difficulties and people with socio-economic disadvantages. Moreover, within the same Specific Objective, another measure (9.1.3) foresees to support people in temporary conditions of economic difficulty that could be easily connected to the kind of services actived by the Municipality of L'Aquila. Additionnally, the measure 9.7.1 envisages boosting projects and partneships among public bodies, private actors and social private elements, with the aim of promoting social innovation, social corporate responsibility and the development of a community welfare.

6. Location

The project has been carried out in the territory of the Municipality of L'Aquila with the involvement of several volunteer organizations working in the town district.

7. Start date (tentative)

April 2014

8. Total revenue / income created / personnel employed by the good practice (EUR)

Around 200.000 € have been invested in the different

9. Challenges

The Local Network of Nearby Services of the Municipality of L'Aquila was created in order to face socio-economic problems of a population having lost properties, interrupted business activities, and dealing with a strong economic crisis, after the earthquake. The general impoverishment of the local comunity and the difficult and slow effort of rebuilding the social tissue has been and still is one the major challenges that L'Aquila faced. In order to respond to this demanding context, the Municipality decided to committ itself to activate a "networking" path to be realized in collaboration with the associations operating in the area, in favor of citizens with social fragility, especially the elderly and disabled, in line with the shared conclusions reached during the consultation for the Action Plan for Social Services.

10. Would this programme work well in another European context?

The creation of a network of services like these could be easily replicated in similar contexts of challenges caused by an exceptional natural disaster, in other Italian or European areas. The initiative involved different volunteering organisations in a cooperation system based on social innovation. The main output of the sub-projects were addressed to the most vulnerable social groups and represented an innovative public-private partnership which succeeded in producing effective-tailored services for the community. The involved local associations have become a powerful tool through which public bodies were able to better provide answers to their citizens' requests.

11. Activities (2000 characters)

The projects realized by the Local Network of Nearby Services during 2014 and 2015 were held through little local partnerships with the associations selected by a public call and included in the programme. These small-scale initiatives covered several fields of the 3 macro-areas identified in the Action Plan for Social Services, such as:

- creation of a telephone line for ensuring the transport of lonely older people with limited or compromised physical capacities, or resettled in other areas due to the earthquake;
- building of a coordination centre for social mobility services;
- experimentation of a phone service for the transport of disabled adults or people followed by social care services;
- elaboration of a supporting programme for families with children between 0-3 years old followed by social care services; as well as a specific programme to sustain women with difficult pregnancies, in order to guide them until the childbirth and through the parenthood;
- creation of a supporting network for poverty-stricken families, by introducing newly "protected measures" of income support, through the supply of meal tickets and vouchers for first necessity goods.
- organization of an after-school laboratory with social and educational activities for young adult followed by social care services.
- activation of a green number service by "Filo d'Argento" association and of a help desk for citizens in problematic conditions, such as older people or adult people until 65 years old.
- realisation of integrated services for resettled or isolated people with limited or compromised physical capacities.

The total cost for all the implemented activities was around 200.000,00 €. From this amount about 148.000,00 € were invested as refund for the expenses incurred by the participant associations, while 52.000,00 € have been used by the Municipality for the realisation of specific socio-economic paths aimed at helping poverty-stricken families with children and for the purchase of goods (such as a bus for disabled people) whose presence was a key factor for the implementation of the programme itself.

12. Achievements so far

In November 2015 the Municipality of L'Aquila published an evaluation report of the first year of the programme. This document illustrates that in one year the public-private partnership was able to implement about 162 intervention plans which produced positive results. The basic strong point of the programme is the satisfaction of the social groups involved in the projects, who have received a range of services not available within the actual local care service system. 19 families living in the temporary housing units have received the support of the local volunteer associations, a total amount of 57 people have avoided the

eviction from their houses, several families received indirect financial help through the payment of bills and provision of basic supplies, beyond a relevant amount of people receiving psychological assistance so far.

The programme has been awarded for its achievements: it has been selected as a part of the "Co-working Laboratory for Social Innovation" promoted by the Abruzzo Region, as unique intervention promoted and led by a public body. Furthermore the activities on integrated housing services have been included as a good practice in the publication "*Il saper fare, viaggio nell'Italia della solidarietà, le buone pratiche dell'Auser*" ("To be able to do: a trip in the solidar Italy, the best practices of Auser") published on January 2016.

13. Strengths, weaknesses, difficulties and lessons learned

The major lesson learned from the experience of the Local Network for Nearby Services of the Municipality of L'Aquila is the creation of new possible forms of dialogue and cooperation between the public and private sectors. The capacity of integrating the available financial resources of the local bodies with the local context of NGO's made possible the assistance to the most vulnerable groups, even in a difficult situation such as the L'Aquila district's one.

It is evident also that the positive results of the initiative were due to the little dimensions of the programme's projects, which were able to assure good results in connection with the territory. The relative weakness of the project was related with the dissemination of the main outputs produced during the programme, a method which could be useful for the replication of the initiative in other Italian or European similar situations.

14. Tips for success

The programme is based on a unique form of integration between the capacities and resources of the private and the public sectors and it demonstrated that this innovative cooperation can produce positive results in terms of social innovation and effective responsiveness. It could be realised in other regional and cross-border contexts where it is possible to involve a variegated group of actors that are directly related to the territory; it could be incisive also because it foresees little sized projects (and with small funds).

15. Dissemination and sustainability

The dissemination is not the best point of this initiative: the projects have been disseminated in the associations web sites but there isn't a specific page or site for the initiative, although several local newspaper talked about it. As far as the sustainability is concerned, the small dimensions of the implemented projects makes possible to continue the mission of the project, even without the public funds; furthermore, the new collaborations and partnerships brought to the development of an enlarged social system, able to produce effects even after the end of the programme itself.

16. Source – URL or Facebook

http://www.comune.laquila.gov.it/archivio3_notizie-e-comunicati_0_3972.html

17. Contact person and details

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